AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, before line 3, insert the following heading:

--BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--

Page 2, replace the paragraph beginning on line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

--The first and most common type is shown in fig. 3, where numeral 31 indicates the keel of the boat, only schematized, and [[22]] 32 indicates the ~~timone~~ rudder. In this embodiment the engine 33 is connected to the propeller 34 via an inclined shaft 35, with the interposition of a reverse reduction gearbox 36. As the shaft cannot have an inclination greater than 10 degrees, and the size of the propeller cannot be reduced, this configuration obviously has to be very long, with a consequent waste of valuable space, together with lubrication problems.--

Page 3, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following heading:

--SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--

Page 4, between lines 10 and 11, insert the following heading:

--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS--

Page 4, between lines 19 and 20, insert the following heading:

--DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS--

Page 4, replace the paragraph beginning on line 20 and bridging pages 4 and 5 with the following amended paragraph:

--~~In figure 1, no. 1 indicates~~ Figure 1 shows the drive unit according to the invention, which receives motion from shaft 2 leading from the engine and transmits it to a shaft 3, fitted at a 90-degree angle to shaft 2, which said shaft 3 constitutes the drive shaft of a stern drive leading to the propellers. Shaft 2 is mounted on bearings 4 in a housing 5 with a rigid structure which contains the kinematic mechanism constituting the drive unit. A pair of coaxial bevel gears 6 ad 7, which are fitted idle opposite one another on shaft 2, both engage with a bevel gear 8 keyed to shaft 3.--